in hotels and private estalishments, their regularisation is governed by orders, issued from time to time by the appropriate Government.

(b) to (d) From time to time representations are received from such workers petitioning Government to intervene in their favour to enable them to get the benefit of regular employment. These are sent to the departments/offices concerned for appropriate action.

Unemployment in North Eastern Region

75. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of unemployed persons in the country, particularly, in the NER as on 31st January, 2000;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to create employment opportunity for reducing unemployment in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The number of job-seekers, all of whom are not necessarily unemployed, who were registered with the Employment Exchanges in the country as on 30th November, 1999 (latest available), was of the order of 405.7 lakhs, out of which 2.3 lakhs were registered in the North East Region.

(b) and (c) The primary objective of the Ninth Plan is to generate greater productive employment in the growth process itself by concentrating on sectors, sub-sectors and technologies which are more labour intensive in regions charactrised by higher rate of unemployment and under employment. The Ninth Plan recognised the high incidence of unemployment and increasing casualisation of labour and adopted a National Employment Assurance Scheme. A Task Force under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Ahluwalia, Member, Planning Commission has been set up to look into the

employment generation taking place and suggest measures to generate at least one hundred million jobs in a period of 10 years (Ten million in each year).

Legislation Tor agricultural labourers

76. SHRI A.VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called any meeting of the State Labour Ministers to discuss about a comprehensive central legislation for agricultural labourers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government will pass any such legislation in the near future; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. A State Labour Minster's Conference was organised to discuss the draft proposal of central legislation for agricultural workers on 18.1.2000. There was no consensus on some of the major components of the draft proposal. The proposal is being re-examined on the basis of the views/ comments of the State Governments.

Plight of Migrant Workers

77. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government is drawn to the news report "Migrant Workers from MP allege harassment in Surat" that appeared in the Times of India dated 20th January, 2000 according to which Hindi speaking people were being either forcibly kept by factory owners @ Rs. 100/- a week or are being deported from Gujarat; and

(b) Government's action and reaction thereto?